Group	*Total Strength*	*SC*	*ST*
B	372	48	5
C	8395	1257	332
D	1707	272	125
D (Safai Karamchari)	106	32	4

(d) Policy in regard to reservation of posts of SCs/STs is being followed by VSP. There are, however, backlog in vacancies in respect of certain posts which could not be filled due to non-availability of suitable SC/ST candidates. Efforts are being made to fill the backlog in vacancies from SC/ST candidates in such categories.

Sponge Iron Project at Vishakhapatnam

2408. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant has any proposal to setting up of a Sponge Iron Project; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Rise in Cost of Assam Refinery

2409. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cost of the Assam Refinery Project has escalated from the original estimate; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) and (b). Against the original estimate of Rs. 1259 crores (July, 1990 prices) the cost of Assam Refinery is now estimated to the about Rs. 1799 crores (July, 1991 prices). The increase in cost is on account of normal escalation since July, 1990, devaluation of rupee, etc.

Silviculture

2410. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering adoption of silviculture in preference of Agriculture by farmers whose lands were unsuited for agriculture;

(b) if so, whether a 'massive campaign' is to be launched on priority basis in this regard; and

(c) if so, salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a)

Silviculture is one of the recommended measurs for land unsuitable for agriculture. The Centrally Sponsored Schemes like Soil Conservation in tha Catchmants of River Valley Projects (RVP), Integrated Watershed managment in the Catchment of Flood Prone Rivars (FPR), National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) etc. provide for promotion of silviculture.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

Visit of High Level Delegation to Nepal

2411. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation headed by the Cabinet Secretary visited Nepal recently;

(b) if so, the bilateral issues discussed in their talks with the Nepalesed leaders; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFARIS (SHRI MADHAVASINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. A high level delegation headed by the Cabinet Secretary and consisting of Foreign Secretary, Finance Secretary and Commerce Secretary visited Nepal on August 3-5 and October 8-10, 1991 for meetings of the Indo-Nepal High Level Task Force.

(b) Having been given the mandate to prepare a comprehensive programme fo bilateral cooperation between India end Nepal, the High Level Task Force chaired by the Cabinet Secretary on the Indian side and tha Chief Secretary on the Nepalesed side discussed various aspects of such cooperation - in industry and human resources development, in the key area of water resources development, in trade, transit, in controlling smuggling, in agriculture, education, civil aviation, tourism etc.

(c) The High Level Task Force has prepared a set of recommendations for bilateral cooperation covering these spheres which are submitted to the Indo-Nepal Joint Commission, scheduled to meet in New Delhi on December 4, 1991.

[*Translation*]

Milk Production in Delhi

2412. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gap between demand and supply of milk in Delhi is widening; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to increase the production of milk in National Capital Region to meet the rising demand for milk in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K.C. LENKA): (a) The total estimated daily demand of milk in Delhi is about 20-25 lakh liters per day. The Delhi Milk Scheme and Mother Dairy combined supply about 10.5. lakh liters per day. The rest of demand is met by the Co-operative Federations of of some of the neighbouring States and Private agencies in the organised and unorganised sector.

(b) The neighbouring States are taking necessary steps for increasing milk production through implementation of various schemes relating to dairy cattle development; fodder development and livestock health in the National Capital Region.